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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000136

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PARM](#) [PHUM](#) [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [ECON](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY-U.S. RELATIONS: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES
KEEPING UP THE MOMENTUM WITH GOT

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Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson, reasons 1.4 b, d

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Ambassador and Turkish MFA U/S Apakan reviewed developments in bilateral relations in the wake of President Gul's January 8-9 talks in Washington. They agreed to coordinate measures for a set of high-level meetings in Washington in mid-April. END SUMMARY.

STRENGTHENING U.S.-TURKEY-IRAQ COORDINATION

¶2. (C) Ambassador noted the newly positive atmosphere in U.S.-Turkey relations established by PM Erdogan's November 5 and President Gul's January 8-9 visits to Washington. He said our task now is to hold that good feeling and use it to accomplish things on our regional agenda. One key will be close coordination on countering the PKK, to include: more senior-level Turkey-Iraq consultations and Turkish support for the Maliki government, gaining the support of Iraqi Kurds against the PKK, and diminishing the PKK's base of support in Turkey. Apakan agreed on the need to maintain momentum in our relations and Iraq's centrality in that equation. He emphasized the need for consultations with Turkey on the future of Iraq and the future framework for U.S.-Iraq relations.

THE AEGEAN AND CYPRUS: CONGRESS SHOULD NOT INTERFERE
WITH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL SETTLEMENT PROCESSES

¶3. (C) Noting the views of some Members of Congress that Armenian genocide resolution should be off the Congressional agenda this year, Ambassador pointed out that Turkey has the time and space now to move Turkey-Armenia relations forward. Apakan agreed, but reminded Ambassador that other resolutions of concern are circulating in Congress pertaining to the Aegean and Cyprus. Such resolutions, even if unlikely to pass, threaten to obstruct Turkish efforts to resolve the Aegean and Cyprus conflicts. On Cyprus, he said the GOT has explained to UNSYG Ban Ki Moon its desire to move directly to a comprehensive settlement through the UN's existing Cyprus "acquis." An agreement can be achieved by the end of 2008, and Turkey is prepared to offer confidence building measures of a military nature to foster this process.

KOSOVO/CFE/MISSILE DEFENSE: CLOSE CONSULTATION NECESSARY

14. (C) Ambassador said that one expert he spoke with described 2008 as the most difficult year in U.S.-Russia relations since the end of the Cold War. Turkey has major interests in each of three major issues that can affect that relationship: Kosovo independence, CFE, and missile defense.

On Kosovo, Ambassador emphasized the need for close consultation and recommended the Turkish Embassy in Washington stay in close touch with DAS DiCarlo, A/S Fried, and Ambassador Wisner. On CFE and missile defense, as well as Iran, our experts need to stay in touch through visits to capitals and at NATO. Apakan agreed and added the need to stay in touch on NATO/ESDP.

UPGRADING OUR ENERGY DIALOGUE

15. (C) Apakan said Energy Minister Guler discussed with Secretary Bodman upgrading U.S.-Turkey energy discussions,

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such as through a bilateral committee or working group. Ambassador noted previous DOE concerns about the over-abundance of international energy working groups, but agreed on the overall need to enhance our energy dialogue. Secretary Rice has asked Ambassador Mann to work on Eurasian

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energy issues, including the Caspian. U/S for Economic Affairs Jeffery and Mann met in Washington with Guler; Mann and Jeffery may visit Turkey in February.

16. (C) DOE can also be helpful on alternative and nuclear energy, Ambassador said. Noting the January 29-30 U.S.-Turkey clean energy conference in Istanbul, Ambassador recalled that Guler has asked for U.S. expertise in energy conservation and efficiency. MFA Deputy DG for Americas Ercin said Guler told Secretary Bodman that tenders for nuclear plant construction will be announced soon and asked him to encourage U.S. companies to bid. Ambassador surmised

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that U.S. companies may or may not step forward as prime contractors, but are likely to seek roles as sub-contractors and equipment providers.

NONPROLIFERATION:

KEEPING UP TURKEY'S STRONG PERFORMANCE
WHILE CONGRESS CONSIDERS 123 AGREEMENT

17. (C) Ambassador foreshadowed White House submission to Congress soon of the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (123) Agreement. During the Congressional review period, Turkey's nuclear nonproliferation record will be under greater scrutiny. Individual cases and nonproliferation issues will get more attention than before. We appreciate Turkey's nonproliferation record, but Ankara should bear this in mind.

Acknowledging the point, Apakan and Deputy DG for Disarmament and Arms Control Gun defended the MFA's record, and said inaccurate or incomplete intelligence damages MFA's credibility in the inter-agency discussions required when specific problems arise.

FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS
TRANSITING TURKEY INTO IRAQ

18. (C) Ambassador noted we have already held consultations with the Turkish General Staff, the intelligence service (MIT), and Turkish law enforcement about a number of foreign terrorist fighters transiting Turkey into Iraq. On these and some other terrorism cases, Turkish law enforcement has indicated there is little the GOT can do because Turkish law defines terrorism only in the case of an attack on Turkey or Turkish interests. Ambassador noted previous efforts to get

the law changed and urged another look by the government.
Apakan took the point.

ANTI-TERROR PROSECUTIONS OF CHILDREN
CAN CREATE BAD HEADLINES

¶9. (C) Ambassador conveyed his concern about the Diyarbakir prosecutor threatening to prosecute, under Turkey's anti-terror law, a Diyarbakir children's choir that sang a song in Kurdish during a recent San Francisco music festival.

While recognizing MFA might have limited influence, he stressed the GOT should know that a prosecution of children for singing is exactly not the picture that will help Turkey garner support against the PKK.

ACCELERATING COOPERATION BY APRIL

¶10. (C) Ambassador described the confluence of U.S.-Turkey discussions set to take place the week of April 14, when the American Turkish Council hosts its annual U.S.-Turkey relations conference, in Washington. We have to have a review of our shared vision commitments, and the U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission (EPC) will also meet. Recalling A/S Fried's December 10 speech mentioning a U.S.-Turkey-Azerbaijan strategic partnership, Ambassador said the Department is also considering a U.S.-Turkey-Azerbaijan economic cooperation meeting in that same timeframe when key Azerbaijani officials may be in town. Ambassador said he has asked his staff to inventory our work on the EPC Action Plan and Shared Vision paper and to try to address by April what we haven't already tackled. Apakan agreed on the benefits of accelerating work. Ercin said that Turkey's response to the draft science and technology agreement should be ready for the U.S. shortly.

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